

BASEBALL—SPORTS OF ALL SORTS—BOXING

Willie Ritchie is not conceded much of a chance against lightweight Champion Freddie Welsh when the two meet in New York next Thursday night. Welsh in the lightweight division is master of the ten-round game, just as Mike Gibbons is among the middleweights.

Ritchie's only chance to nail the victory is to put over a damaging punch or two which will make up for the speed and cleverness the Britisher is sure to exhibit. Few men in the game can hit Fred hard enough to hurt him when he is fresh, and he can maintain a fast clip for ten rounds.

Ritchie has a chance, but it is a slim one.

Local fans will have a chance to glimpse Gunboat Smith in training this week. He will arrive for his fight with Jack Dillon in Milwaukee, March 16, making his headquarters at Forbes' gym. There he will do all his work, remaining probably until the day of the battle, when he will pull out for the ring side.

Smith is not favorably disposed toward a proposition to substitute with some other heavy for the Johnson-Willard match in Juarez. The Mexican city would be willing to put on the go and provide a fair guaranty, as it has its appetite aroused for a bill between heavies.

Smith, however, can't see the greaser match under any considerations. He believes he can do better here and will wait for a crack at Willard in New Orleans in case Big Jess should lick Johnson.

The Johnson-Willard affair, however, is still in the air. The latest is that it will be held in April. April 1 would be an appropriate date.

There is one thing about this war to be thankful for; it lessens the number of things an afterdinner speaker dares talk about.

Joe Tinker's Federals opened the preliminary season today at Shreveport, La., with a series of stunts calculated to limber stiffened muscles and prepare for the coming grind of baseball. Weather conditions were not favorable to baseball, but that failed to bother Tinker. His early schedule merely calls for the oiling of winter-creaking joints.

It will probably be two days before the practice field is in condition for actual diamond work.

Leslie Mann, former Boston Brave outfielder, met the team at Shreveport, torpedoing a rumor that he had re-jumped to the National league fellows. With Mann were three recruits who will make a fight for regular berths. Ad Brennan and Claude Hendrix, the star pitchers, are still at Hot Springs, Ark., and will be allowed to remain there until they feel in their own minds they are fit to tackle the grind of spring work.

Brennan is looked on as a big asset for the coming season. He was almost valueless last year because of a strain in his throwing arm, and this left Tinker without a topky southpaw, a handicap which bulked large in the final casting up of games won and lost. With an offside thrower of quality Joe figures he would have copped at least half a dozen more games and that would have given him the pennant over Indianapolis by a good margin.

Particular attention this spring will be devoted to the pitching crew. Around Hendrix, Brennan and Rankin Johnson Joe plans to ring two or three youngsters who can carry their share of the burden. The teaching falls to Mordecai Brown, who is signed with the Whales. The old Cub marvel will have the management of the second team, with instructions to give particular tutoring to the pitchers.

Exhibition game No. 1 for the Cubs